

# 15 Compare Vocational Training and College Choices

## TRANSITION OBJECTIVE

Students will gain the skills they need to decide which post-school college or vocational training option they will pursue.

## RELEVANCE TO SUCCESSFUL TRANSITION

As high school comes to an end, each student must consider the next step. After looking carefully at the options, each must decide what is best at this time.

## INSTRUCTIONAL SEQUENCE

### ❑ STEP 1: Update Journal

After high school I will plan to . . .

### ❑ STEP 2: Convene Roundtable

"After high school, my next step is \_\_\_\_."

### ❑ STEP 3: Advance Organizer

"Today you will debate the positive and negative aspects of college and vocational training."

pages to effectively argue in favor of their topic and then use the **Debate Guide** to organize their arguments. Give teams 15 minutes to prepare their arguments.

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### Next Steps to Vocational Training

**Length of program:**  
From a few days to two years depending on the type of program. Some programs offer certificates, others offer career diplomas or licenses.

**Examples of programs:**

Cabinetmaker	Physical Therapy Assistant
Chef	Retail Salesperson
Clerk/Typist	Teacher Aide
Dog Obedience Trainer	Mechanic
Locksmith	Video Game Designer
Medical Assistant	Welder
Optician	


**Acceptance requirements:**  
Most require a high school diploma or a GED.

**Admission:**  
Application, basic skills test for technical fields such as medical assistant.

**Learning Format:**  
Classroom using lecture and textbook, and hands-on training in the classroom online or on a job site.

**Placement after training:**  
Many vocational training programs offer placement services for students who complete the program.

**Support services:**  
Vocational training programs usually do not have specific services for students with disabilities.



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### Next Steps to College

**Length of Program:**  
AA Degree - 2 years, BA/BS Degree - 4 years  
MA/MS Degree - 5 years or longer

**Examples of Programs:**

Accountant	Engineer
Airline Pilot	Park Ranger
Chiropractor	Probation Officer
Computer Programmer	Teacher
Counselor	Veterinarian


**College Acceptance Requirements:**  
To be accepted by most colleges, you will need a high school diploma, a grade point average above 2.5, class rank above 50%, SAT/ACT and specific high school classes.

**Admission:**  
Complete a college application, send letters of recommendation (from teachers, employers) and write an essay about yourself and your goals.

**Learning Format:**  
Classroom lecture, classroom activities, laboratory and computer activities, and written tests.

**Placement After Training:**  
The college placement office will hold your file and supply information about job openings.

**Support Services:**  
Almost all colleges have services and a resource center for students with physical or learning disabilities. To qualify you must identify yourself as having a disability.



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### ❑ STEP 4: Activity - 20 Minutes

Divide the class into two teams and assign each team either college or vocational training as a topic for a debate. Students should use **Next Steps** to prepare for the debate. Tell them they need to study both

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### Debate Guide

Team Members: \_\_\_\_\_

Your Debate Topic: \_\_\_\_\_

List four reasons your topic is the best choice for students:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

List four reasons to show the other topic is a bad choice:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How will you argue that your topic is a better choice than the other topic?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Give personal examples showing why your topic is the best choice:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How can you defend your topic?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What is your final argument about this topic?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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### □ STEP 5: Activity - 15 Minutes

After the teams have prepared their arguments, form groups of four with two teams, one representing college and the other representing vocational training. The teams representing vocational training will start the debate and defend their topic for two minutes. The college teams will then get two minutes to defend. Next, each team will

have two minutes each to rebut the other team. Circulate through the teams.

### □ STEP 6: Activity - 10 Minutes

Debrief the class by reviewing the most important points from each side. Help students realize that both options are equally good, depending on individual preference. Emphasize that their choice could change in a few years. For example many people go to college in their 30s or older. Some people who have gone to college also will go through vocational training in their adult life.

### □ STEP 7: Evaluate Outcomes

One thing I learned from the debate was "\_\_\_\_\_."

### □ STEP 8: Connecting Activity

Interview five adults about college and vocational training to ask the following questions: Did you have training or college after high school? How did you decide what you would do after high school? If you could, would you make a different decision? Why?

## KEY WORDS

implication

influence  
placementresult  
acceptancefulfillment  
requirements

admission

### MATERIALS AND PREPARATION

- Student Handouts: **Next Steps**, pages 149-150; **Debate Guide**, page 151.
- Prepare to discuss the advantages of both training and college.
- Prepare to facilitate the debate.

### SCANS FOUNDATION SKILLS

- Basic Academic Skills: Listening, Speaking, Writing
- Thinking Skills: Creative Thinking, Problem-Solving, Reasoning, Decision Making
- Personal Qualities: Self-Management, Sociability